Request for Reconsideration

Claims 1 to 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Wachtfogel et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0138831) in view of Jokinen et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0095333).

Assertion of Priority

The above rejection relies on a combination of references. However, the earliest effective filing date of one of the references, Jokinen et al., is January 18, 2001. By contrast, the claimed priority date of the present application is August 23, 2000, which antedates the effective date of the Jokinen et al. reference.

In order to perfect the claimed priority date of August 23, 2000, a verified translation of the priority document, Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-252004, is submitted with this response. In view of the perfected priority claim, Jokinen et al. is no longer citable as prior art against the pending claims.

With Jokinen et al. removed, the basis for the above rejection is no longer sustainable. Clearly, as the Examiner has recognized and acknowledged in the Office Action, Wachtfogel et al. alone does not anticipate nor render obvious the claims of the present application.

Moreover, Wachtfogel et al. was discussed at length in the applicant's previous response, the comments of which are

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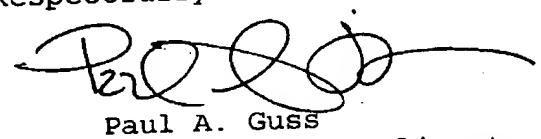
incorporated herein by reference. For the reasons discussed in the previous response, Wachtfogel et al. does not disclose or suggest the features of the pending claims.

Accordingly, since the rejection has been made moot in view of the assertion of priority, withdrawal of the rejection, and an indication of allowance of claims 1 to 12, is respectfully requested.

No fees are due at this time. Nonetheless, should the USPTO determine that any fees are due at this time, such fees may be charged to the Attorney's Deposit Account No. 07-2519.

Respectfully submitted,



Paul A. Guss
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 33,099

Attachment:
Verified Translation of Priority Document

CS-37-010822
775 S. 23rd St. #2
Arlington, VA 22202
(703) 486-2710

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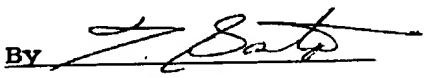
C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, TATSUHIKO SATO, SATO & ASSOCIATES, Shinjuku Maynds Tower 16F, 1-1, Yoyogi 2-chome, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo, Japan, do hereby certify that I am the translator of the officially certified copy of the Patent Application No. 2000-252004 filed in Japan on the 23rd day of August 2000 and certify that the following is a true and correct translation to the best of my knowledge and belief.

By 

TATSUHIKO SATO

Dated this 4th day of June 2004

(Translation)

[Name of Document] Patent Application
[Ref. No.] PSB49191JP
[Filing date] August 23, 2000
[Addressed to] Mr. Commissioner of Patent Office
[International Patent Classification] G06F 17/00
[Inventor]
[Address] 98-21, Hamajiri-machi, Takasaki-shi, Gumma-ken, Japan
[Name] Kaoru KOBAYASHI
[Applicant for Patent]
[Address] 98-21, Hamajiri-machi, Takasaki-shi, Gumma-ken, Japan
[Name] Kaoru KOBAYASHI
[Agent]
[Identification Number] 100077805
[Patent Attorney]
[Name] Tatsuhiko SATO
[Appointed Agent]
[Identification Number] 100077665
[Patent Attorney]
[Name] Yoshihiro CHIBA
[Official Fee]
[Deposit Account Number] 015174
[Amount] 21,000
[List of Annexed Documents]
[Name of Document] Specification 1
[Name of Document] Drawings 1
[Name of Document] Abstract 1
[Necessity of Proof] YES

[Document's Name] Specification

[Title of the Invention]

Advertising System

[Claim]

[Claim 1]

An advertising system, which provides advertisements on a display of a computer through a network communications system, comprising:

storing means for storing advertisements after gradually fractionalizing advertisement areas thereof, categorizing the advertisements according to levels of fractionalization and area sections within the levels, and categorizing the advertisements according to the content thereof;

data receiving means for receiving from said computer perusal data indicating the levels of fractionalization, the area sections within the levels and the content of the advertisements;

retrieving means for retrieving, from information stored in the storing means, advertisements categorized according to the levels of the fractionalization, the area sections and the content of the advertisements, all of which are concerned with the perusal data received by the data receiving means; and

data transmitting means for transmitting to the computer advertisement data on the advertisements retrieved by the retrieving means.

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[Claim 2]

An advertising system according to claim 1, wherein:

said data receiving means comprises means for receiving from the computer for providing advertisements category data on said levels of the fractionalization with respect to said advertisements, the area sections on the levels and the content of the advertisements; and

said storing means comprises means for storing the advertisements by categorizing them based on the category data received by the data receiving means.

[Claim 3]

An advertising system according to claim 1, wherein said storing means comprises means for storing the advertisements containing common content in given area limits within higher levels of said fractionalization.

[Claim 4]

An advertising system according to claim 3, comprising:

a counter for counting the number of the advertisements containing the common content in given area limits, according to the content of the advertisements, wherein said storing means comprises means for storing a higher number of the advertisements containing the common content in given area limits within said higher levels of the fractionalization.

[Claim 5]

An advertising system according to any one of claims

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1 through 4, wherein said computer comprises a mobile computer which is small and portable in size.

[Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[Technical Field to which the Invention Belongs]

The present invention relates to an advertising system which places advertisements on a display of a computer via a network communications system.

[0002]

[Prior Art]

A mobile computer having an Internet connection, such as a cellular phone, which has become tremendously popular in recent years, plays an important role as a data transmitting medium using network systems. Reflecting the popularity of such mobile computers, the use thereof makes it possible to peruse job advertisements at given web sites. Thus, there arise expectations that a mobile computer can be used as an effective tool for companies to hire personnel, or for prospective workers to look for jobs. The mobile computer enables users to access web sites designed for job advertisements and, by specifying working areas and occupation types, to peruse specialized job advertisements which include the chosen working areas (i.e., geographic areas) and occupation types.

[0003]

However, considering the huge number of job advertisements relating to taverns and pubs, for example, if

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users fail to specify working areas effectively, job advertisements relating to taverns and pubs could become enormous in number, making them difficult to peruse. In such a case, it would also be time consuming for users to come across job advertisements suitable for their needs. Moreover, the connection fee would be higher if users attempt to peruse all of the job advertisements, due to the limited display size of mobile computers, whereby users are forced to complete difficult tasks of repeating the same operations and browsing each page of the job advertisements.

[0004]

On the other hand, if one narrows down the working area, very few job advertisements would be available to those who look for a job requiring specialized skills such as a lacquer worker. In this case, it is more likely that users would find no job advertisements suitable for their needs.

[0005]

The above phenomena demonstrate that, depending on the occupation types, job advertisements become enormous in number in some cases and too few in others, so that perusing job advertisements by users has not been promoted as much as expected, and job advertisers have been unlikely to employ the personnel they require.

[0006]

[Problems to be Solved by the Invention]

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide an advertising system capable of balancing the

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degrees of specifying the geographic areas of employment for advertisements, and the number of displayed advertisements, in accordance with the content thereof.

[0007]

[Means to Solve the Problems]

The inventors of the present invention realized certain tendencies among users, namely, that while specifying areas of the advertisements containing mediocre content (i.e., content concerning unskilled employment opportunities), users still tend to extensively peruse advertisements containing specialized content without specifying the areas thereof. The present invention is based on such realization.

[0008]

To achieve the aforementioned object, there is provided in accordance with the present invention an advertising system, comprising storing means for storing advertisements after gradually fractionalizing advertisement areas thereof, categorizing the advertisements according to levels of fractionalization and area sections within the levels, and categorizing the advertisements according to the content thereof, data receiving means for receiving from a computer perusal data indicating the levels of fractionalization, the area sections within the levels and the content of the advertisements, retrieving means for retrieving, from information stored in the storing means, advertisements categorized according to the levels of fractionalization, the area sections and the content of the

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advertisements, all of which are concerned with the perusal data received by the data receiving means, and data transmitting means for transmitting to the computer advertisement data on the advertisements retrieved by the retrieving means.

[0009]

According to the present invention, advertisements containing mediocre content can be stored in the storing means by categorizing them only into area sections located at high levels of the fractionalized areas. In this case, users can peruse advertisements containing mediocre content only when they choose the high level area sections. Furthermore, the number of the advertisements containing mediocre content can be properly restricted due to the fact that as the levels of fractionalization become higher, the more selectively the area sections are restricted. Thus, situations in which advertisements containing mediocre content become enormous in number can be prevented.

[0010]

Moreover, according to the present invention, advertisements containing specialized content can be stored in the storing means by categorizing them only into area sections located at low levels of the fractionalized areas. In this case, users can peruse advertisements containing specialized content only when they choose such low level area sections. Further, the number of advertisements containing specialized content can be properly secured, due to the fact

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that the area sections are not selectively restricted within the lower levels of fractionalization. Thus, situations in which advertisements containing specialized content become too few in number can be prevented.

[0011]

Since the situations in which the perusable advertisements become enormous or too few in number are avoided, it can be expected that the perusal of the advertisements by users is promoted and that an improvement in the effectiveness of such advertising is achieved.

[0012]

There is also provided, in accordance with the present invention, an advertising system wherein the data receiving means further comprises means for receiving, from a computer for providing advertisements, category data on the levels of fractionalization with respect to the advertisements, area sections on the levels, and the content of the advertisements, wherein the storing means comprises means for storing advertisements by categorizing them based on the category data received by the data receiving means.

[0013]

According to the present invention, advertisers can specify the levels of the area sections by using the computer for providing advertisements, in accordance with tendencies of users to specify area sections based on content thereof.

[0014]

There is further provided in accordance with the

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present invention an advertising system wherein the storing means further comprises means for storing a higher number of advertisements containing common content, within given area limits, within higher levels of fractionalization.

[0015]

There is further provided in accordance with the present invention an advertising system comprising a counter for counting the number of the advertisements containing common content within given area limits according to the content of the advertisements, wherein the storing means further comprises means for storing a higher number of advertisements containing common content, within given area limits, within higher levels of fractionalization.

[0016]

According to the present invention, since there are a large number of advertisements containing content common to each other, advertisements containing mediocre content can be stored in the storing means by categorizing them into high-level area sections. Furthermore, since there are a small number of advertisements containing content common to each other, advertisements containing specialized content can be stored in the storing means by categorizing them into low-level area sections.

[0017]

There is further provided, in accordance with the present invention, an advertising system wherein the computer comprises a mobile computer which is small and portable in

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size. As indicated earlier, the small and portable size of the mobile computer usually forces users to read a limited amount of information at a time on the display thereof. As a result, the more advertisements users attempt to peruse, the longer the connection time takes, and accordingly a higher connection fee is incurred. However, according to the present invention, such situations can be prevented due to the fact that the number of the advertisements is appropriately adjusted. Furthermore, according to the present invention, it can be expected that an improvement in effectiveness of the advertising is achieved, because the small and portable size of the mobile computer enables users to peruse advertisements without limitations on time and place of use.

[0018]

[Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments].

The embodiments of the present invention will hereinafter be described in more detail with reference to the accompanying drawings. Fig. 1 is a view which illustrates a configuration of an advertising system according to an embodiment of the present invention. Fig. 2 is a view which illustrates of a category of advertisements based on the advertising system according to an embodiment of the present invention. Fig. 3(a), Fig. 3(b), Fig. 3(c), Fig 3(d), Fig. 3(e) and Fig 3(f) are views illustrating displays of a computer which is used in association with the advertising system according to an embodiment of the present invention.

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[0019]

As shown in Fig. 1, the advertising system comprises a database (storing means) 1, data receiving means 2, retrieving means 3 and data transmitting means 4. The advertising system is intended for mobile computer users, the mobile computer x being capable of establishing network communications, such as a cellular or handy telephone, as well as for companies seeking personnel who use such mobile computers, by providing advertisements through an information processing terminal y for providing advertisements also capable of establishing network communications.

[0020]

The database 1 stores advertisements, after gradually fractionalizing (i.e., sub-dividing) job areas, categorizing job advertisements (referred to simply as "advertisements" hereafter) according to levels of fractionalization and area sections within the levels, and categorizing the job advertisements according to the content thereof. These categorizations are transmitted to the data receiving means 2 through the information processing terminals y providing the advertisements and capable of establishing network communications, and then are completed based on "category data" with respect to the levels of fractionalization of the job advertisement areas, the area sections within the levels and the content of the job advertisements. Furthermore, as shown in Fig. 2, the levels of the fractionalization of the areas are such that Level 1

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means major area sections (i.e., countries) of the world such as "Japan," "USA," "Europe," and the like, Level 2 means area sections fractionalizing the major area sections, for example, the country "Japan" is fractionalized into sub-areas of "Hokkaido," "Tohoku," "Kanto," and the like, Level 3 means area sections further fractionalized, for example, wherein the "Kanto" region of Japan is fractionalized into prefectural regions such as "Tokyo," "Kanagawa," and the like, and finally Level 4 means area sections further fractionalized, for example, a prefectural region like "Tokyo" is fractionalized into city regions thereof like "Sinjuku," "Shibuya," and the like. The higher the Level number becomes (Level 1 → Level 2 → Level 3 → Level 4), the higher the level of the fractionalization of the area becomes.

[0021]

The data receiving means 2 receives from the computer x "perusal data" concerning the levels of the fractionalization of the areas, the area sections within such levels and the content of the advertisements. The retrieving means 3 retrieves, from the job advertisements stored in the database 1, job advertisements which are categorized according to the levels of fractionalization of the areas, the area sections and the content of the advertisements, all of which relate to the "perusal data." The data transmitting means 4 then transmits to the computer x the "advertisement data" for the job advertisements retrieved by the retrieving means 3.

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[0022]

An embodiment making use of the advertising system of the above configuration shall be described in more detail with reference to Figs. 1 through 3. To begin with, when the computer x is ready to access a web site established by an administrator of the advertising system, as shown in Fig. 3(a), Menu Bars such as "Choose Areas," "Choose Keyword(s)," "Return" and "Next" appear on the display thereof. Next, when "Choose Areas" is selected, as shown in Fig. 3(b), a list of area sections for Level 1, such as "Japan," "USA," and the like, appears. Furthermore, when "Japan" and "Next" are selected, as shown in Fig. 3(c), a list of area sections for Level 2 which fractionalize "Japan" into sub-areas such as "Hokkaido," "Tohoku," and the like, appears. Furthermore, when "Kanto" and "Next" are selected, as shown in Fig. 3(d), a list of area sections for Level 3 fractionalizing "Kanto" into further sub-areas such as "Tokyo," "Kanagawa," and the like, appears. Furthermore, when "Tokyo" and "Choose Keyword(s) are selected, as shown in Fig. 3(e), a list including the area section "Tokyo" and content concerning job advertisements, such as "Short-Term Jobs," "Catering," and the like, appear.

[0023]

Finally, when "Catering" and "Next" are selected, a level of the fractionalization of the areas (i.e., Level 3), a section area of this level (i.e., Tokyo) and the content of job advertisements (i.e., Catering), all of which are

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concerned with the "perusal data," are transmitted from the computer x to the data receiving means 2. In the meantime, the retrieving means 3 retrieves from the database 1 job advertisements categorized according to the "perusal data" for "Level 3," "Tokyo" and "Catering." Then, the data transmitting means 4 transmits to the computer x the "advertisement data" for the job advertisements retrieved. In this manner, as shown in Fig. 3(f), certain job advertisements based on the "advertisement data" appear on the display of the computer x. Then, by selecting "Next," more specific job advertisements based on the "advertisement data" appear on the display of the computer x. When "Return" on the Menu Bar is selected, the last-viewed page on the display appears. For example, when "Return" is selected in Fig. 3(c), the screen shown in Fig. 3(b) appears.

[0024]

According to the advertising system of the present embodiment, job advertisements concerning mediocre or unskilled occupations, such as working at a tavern, can be stored in the database 1 by categorizing them only into area sections located within high levels of the fractionalized areas. In this case, users can peruse job advertisements concerning mediocre occupations only when they choose high-level area sections through their computer x. Furthermore, the number of the job advertisements concerning mediocre occupations can be properly restricted due to the fact that the higher the levels of fractionalization become, the more

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selectively the area sections are restricted. Thus, a situation in which job advertisements concerning mediocre occupations become enormous in number can be prevented.

[0025]

Moreover, according to the present invention, job advertisements concerning specialized occupations can be stored in the computer x by categorizing them only in area sections located within low levels of the fractionalized areas. In this case, users can peruse job advertisements containing information relating to a specialized occupation only when they choose low-level area sections. Further, the number of the job advertisements concerning specialized occupations can be properly secured, due to the fact that the area sections are not selectively restricted within the lower levels of the fractionalized areas. Thus, a situation in which perusable job advertisements concerning specialized occupations become too few in number can be prevented. Since a situation in which the number of the perusable job advertisements become either enormous or too few in number is prevented, it can be expected that perusing of job advertisements by users will be promoted, and that employers placing such job advertisements will be able to employ the personnel they require.

[0026]

In the above embodiment, "advertisements" are job advertisements, wherein the "content" thereof are categorized according to the type of occupation offered. However,

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"advertisements" may be all kinds of advertisements, including advertisements for selling used cars, exchanging goods, providing services, and the like, wherein the "content" thereof may be the types and prices of the used cars, the types of the goods exchanged, the details of the services provided, and the like accordingly.

[0027]

In the above embodiment, the areas are fractionalized at four levels. However, the areas may be fractionalized at any number of plural levels. Furthermore, in the above embodiment, the number of the levels into which the areas are fractionalized changes in an ascending manner from one through four (i.e., Level 1 → Level 2 → Level 3 → Level 4) by repeating operations of the computer x. However, this number may change in a descending manner from four through one (i.e., Level 4 → Level 3 → Level 2 → Level 1).

[0028]

In the above embodiment, the job advertisements are categorized based on the "advertisement data" transmitted from the information processing terminal y for providing advertisements to the data receiving means 2, and then are stored in the database 1. However, the job advertisements may be categorized pursuant to "job offer data" which an administrator of the advertising system inputs using a data input device (not shown), based on information obtained from job advertisers via telephone.

[0029]

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Furthermore, the number of the job advertisements concerning types (i.e., content) of occupations within given areas such as the whole country, Kanto, Matsue City, or for areas along both sides of a certain river, and the like, may be counted manually by the administrator of the advertising system. Then, the job advertisements may be stored in the database 1 using a general rule that as the count number becomes higher, job advertisements are categorized within higher levels of the area sections. Moreover, the above number may be counted by a counter automatically, rather than manually by the administrator of the advertising system. In this modification, job advertisements containing mediocre types of occupations can be stored using the general rule that as the count number becomes higher, job advertisements containing mediocre occupation types are categorized within higher levels of the area sections. On the other hand, job advertisements containing specialized types of occupations can be stored in the database 1 using a general rule that as the count number becomes lower, job advertisements containing specialized occupation types are categorized within lower levels of the area sections.

[0030]

Further, in the above embodiments, advertisements are perused using a mobile computer. However, the advertisements may also be perused through a desktop computer.

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[Fig. 1]

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A view which illustrates a configuration of an advertising system according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 2]

A view which illustrates a category of advertisements based on the advertising system according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[Fig. 3]

Views illustrating displays of a computer which is used in association with the advertising system according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[Explanation of Reference Signs in Drawings]

1... database (storing means)

2... data receiving means

3... retrieving means

4... data transmitting means

x... (mobile) computer

y... information processing terminal for providing advertisements

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[Document's Name] Abstract

[Abstract]

[Problems] An advertising system is disclosed which is capable of balancing the degree of specifying geographical areas for advertisements and the number of advertisements being displayed, in accordance with content of the advertisements.

[Solutions] A database 1 stores the advertisements, after gradually fractionalizing the advertisement areas into increasingly more specific geographic regions, categorizing the advertisements according to levels of fractionalization and the area sections within the levels, and further categorizing the advertisements according to the content thereof. A data receiving means 2 receives from a computer x "perusal data" indicating the levels of fractionalization of the areas, the area sections within the levels and the content of the advertisements. A retrieving means 3 retrieves from the advertisements stored in the database 1 advertisements categorized according to the levels of fractionalization of the areas, the area sections and the content of the advertisements, all of which are concerned with the "perusal data," and a data transmitting means 4 transmits "advertisement data" of the retrieved advertisements to the computer x.

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[Document's Nam] Drawings

[FIG. 1]

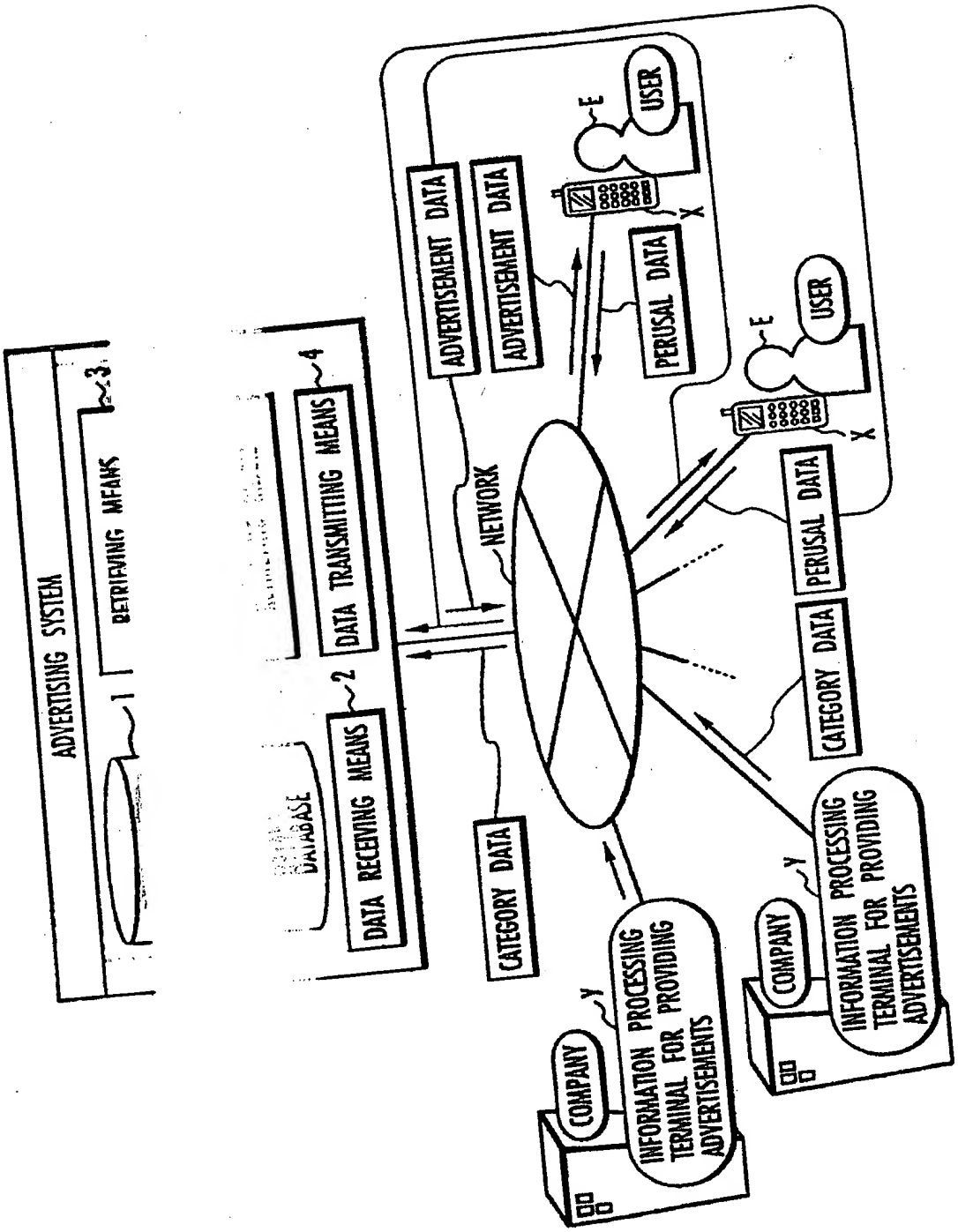

FIG. 1

[FIG. 2]

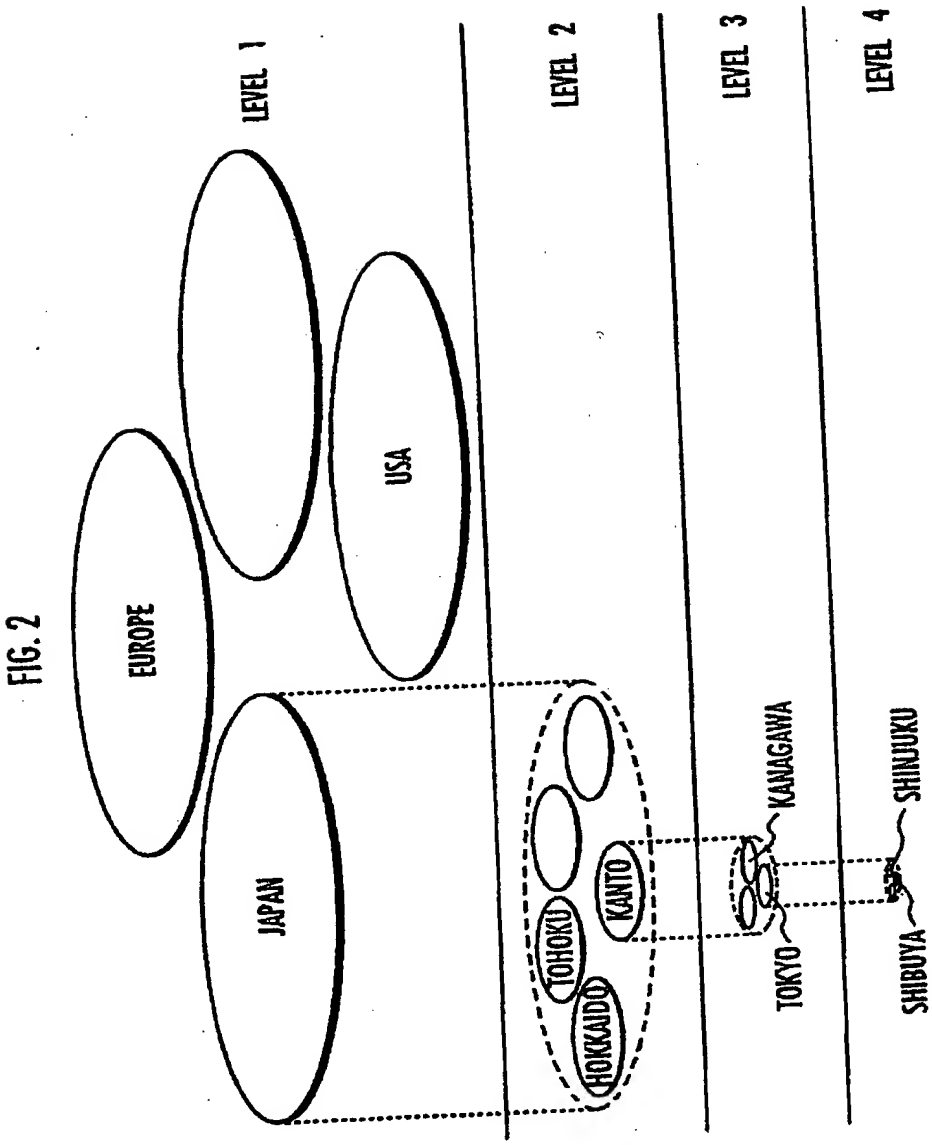
LEVEL 1
LEVEL 2
LEVEL 3
LEVEL 4
EUROPE
USA
JAPAN
TOHOKU
KANTO
HOKKAIDO
KANAGAWA
TOKYO
SHINJUKU
SHIBUYA

FIG. 2

[FIG. 3]

FIG. 3 (a)

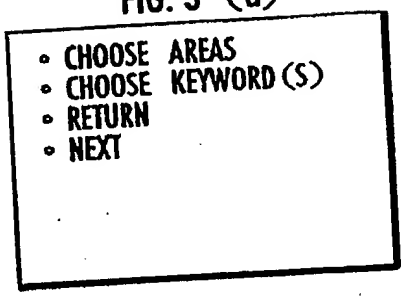

FIG. 3 (b)

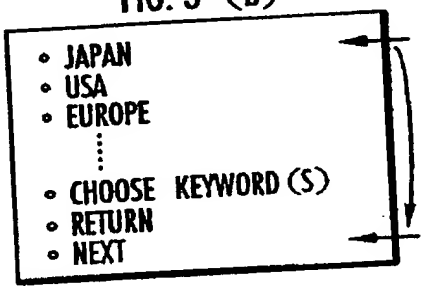

FIG. 3 (c)

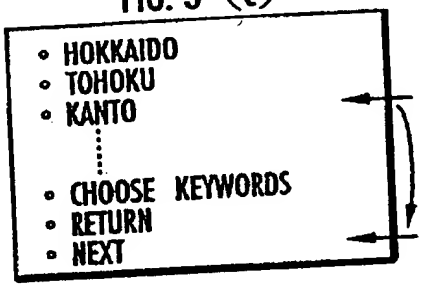

FIG. 3 (d)

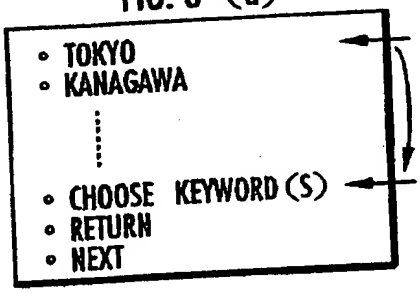

FIG. 3 (e)

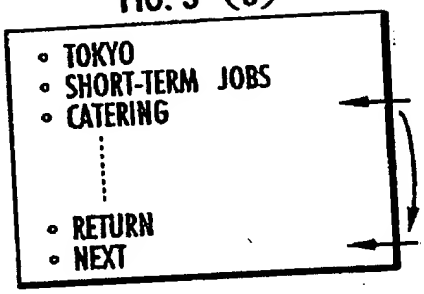

FIG. 3 (f)